



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

For Information Contact Public Affairs
WYN HORNBUCKLE
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

ILLEGAL ALIEN SENTENCED TO TEN MONTHS IN PRISON FOR POSSESSION OF A FIREARM

TUCSON – On January 11, 2007, Ricardo Noriega-Martinez, 33, of Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced here to 10 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Cindy K. Jorgenson. Noriega-Martinez pleaded guilty on October 12, 2006, to the charge of Illegal Alien in Possession of a Firearm.

On July 15, 2006, Pima County Sheriff's Department Deputies made a traffic stop on the vehicle that Noriega-Martinez was driving without headlights near Golf Links and Swan Road in Tucson. During the subsequent investigation, it was discovered that Noriega-Martinez was wearing a belt concealed under his pants, below waist level, attached to which was a holster carrying a Hi-Point 9mm semiautomatic handgun. Defendant admitted that he was carrying the gun for protection, even though he knew it was illegal for an illegal alien such as himself to carry a weapon.

Noriega-Martinez's prosecution is part of the District of Arizona's Project Safe Neighborhoods, an illegal firearms enforcement program. The effectiveness of Project Safe Neighborhoods in Arizona is based on the ability of federal, state, and local agencies to cooperate in a unified offensive that is led by the U.S. Attorney. Through ongoing partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, like the one in this case, the U.S. Attorney is implementing a series of strategies that are contoured to fit the specific gun crime problems throughout Arizona.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Pima County Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Border Patrol, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The prosecution was handled by Jennifer J. Maldonado, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-1500-TUC-CKJ
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